



## RAMONA PALMER-EASON

### PARTNER

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Ramona Palmer-Eason is a seasoned legal practitioner with extensive experience in employment and labor, employee benefits and executive compensation, litigation and compliance.

With 20 years of experience as in-house counsel for a major international retailer, Ramona's experience spans the intersection of the law and human resources, which enables her to skillfully advocate for her clients in employment-related disputes.

Her experience includes successfully defending Title VII charges including age, race and sex discrimination claims; overseeing reduction-in-force and organizational restructuring processes, and related ERISA severance programs; drafting and developing HIPAA privacy policies and procedures; managing employment and benefit matters related to due diligence in the context of mergers and acquisitions; collective bargaining; drafting nondisclosure and no-compete agreements and negotiating the terms of various types of commercial agreements (i.e., IT contracts, CRM agreements, outsourcing agreements, temporary staffing provider agreements, buying agent agreements, sourcing agreements, marketing agreements, commercial lease agreements, distribution agreements, general service provider and vendor agreements, benefit plan administrative services agreements, etc.).

Her experience also extends to investigations; ethics and compliance, including training, auditing and hotline administration; oversight of immigration and work visa matters; drafting employment, consulting and separation agreements; welfare and retirement plan administration and governance; records management and general liability and workers' compensation claims. In addition, her experience includes board administration and governance, and advising on crisis management response.

### BACKGROUND

Prior to joining Armstrong Teasdale, Ramona spent 20 years in-house for a multibillion-dollar international footwear retailer, where she served most recently as Group Counsel - Global Employment and Litigation/Head of HR, and prior to that Group Counsel - Employment, Benefits, Compensation and Retail Law. In those roles, she was responsible for managing legal and HR teams globally, including in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Guam, Saipan, Canada, Asia and Latin America, and provided strategic counsel across a variety of practices and business units.

Before that, she worked as a labor relations specialist for the state of Iowa, and held various clerkships and internships, including for the City of Des Moines Legal

### SERVICES AND INDUSTRIES

Litigation

Employment and Labor

Employee Benefits and  
Executive Compensation

Governance and Compliance

Noncompete and Trade

Secrets

Outside General Counsel

Consumer Products and  
Services

Health Care and Life Sciences

Higher Education

Manufacturing and Innovation

### ADMISSIONS

Kansas

Missouri

U.S. District Court, District of

Kansas

Department, Drake Bea and Neal Smith Legal Clinic, U.S. Attorneys' Office for the Southern District of Iowa, Drake University Legal Research Service and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

## **EDUCATION**

- Drake University Law School (J.D., 1996)
  - Black Law Students Association (BLSA), President
  - Communication Law Society
  - Moot Court
  - Drake Legal Research Society
  - Phi Alpha Delta Law Fraternity
- Drake University (B.A., 1993)
  - Journalism and Mass Communications
  - Mortar Board
  - National Association of Black Journalists
  - Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

## **PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES**

- Association of Corporate Counsel, Member (2016-2020)
- National Employment Law Council, Member (2014-present)
- Corporate Counsel Women of Color, Member (2014-present)
- National Association of Stock Plan Professionals, Member (2002-2012)
- American Bar Association

## **CHARITABLE AND CIVIC INVOLVEMENT**

- Brown Foundation for Educational Equity, Excellence and Research, Board Member (2004-present), Past Board Chair and Scholarship Committee Chair
- Jack and Jill of America, Inc., Johnson County Chapter Member and Parliamentarian (2009-present)
- Friends of Raintree Montessori Board of Directors, President (2020-present) and Vice President (2017-2020)
- YWCA of Topeka, Kansas, Past Board Vice President (2003- 2007)
- Drake School of Journalism National Advisory Board (1998-2004)
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.

## **ACCOLADES**

- Payless ShoeSource, Inc., Pinnacle Award (2007)
- Payless ShoeSource, Inc., Associate Resources Team Business Partner of the Year Nomination (2003)
- Payless Award of Excellence (2002, 2007, 2014)
- Iowa Department of Personnel Blue Whale Leadership Award (1996)

- Iowa Public Leadership Institute (1996-1997)
- Iowa Bar Association's Most Outstanding Senior Student Award (1996)
- Drake University Law School Outstanding Journalist of the Year (1995)
- Drake University Law School Intramural Moot Court Competition Semi-Finalist (1994- 1995)

## **EXPERIENCE**

### **Labor Negotiations for International Footwear Retailer Prior to Chapter 11 Bankruptcy and Liquidation**

Handled all labor negotiations and contract administration for two collective bargaining agreements, covering 24 retail stores and approximately 100 employees prior to bankruptcy and liquidation of North America retail brick and mortar business for an international footwear retailer.

### **Labor Negotiations for State Government**

Represented management in labor negotiations with three large labor unions with represented membership of over 5,000 employees.